



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Part 5

Economic Organisation

Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives



www.uwtsd.ac.uk

Learning outcomes

- The purpose of economic management at the world level and family level.
- Implications on husband and wife relation and that between parents and children

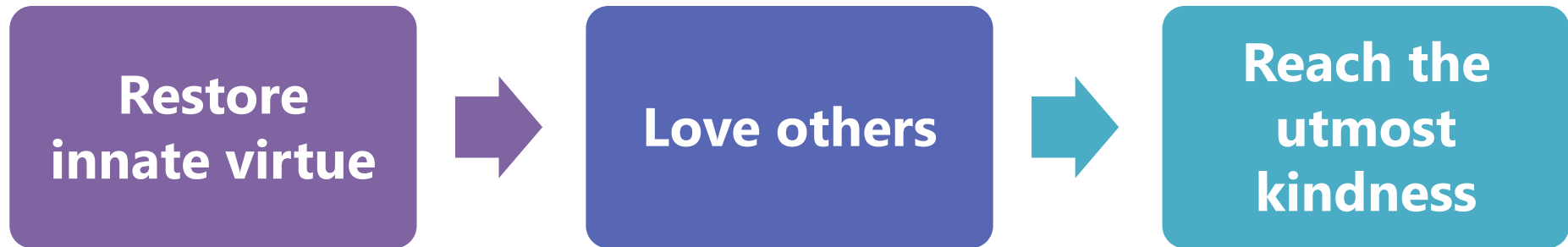
I. THE WORLD AS THE LARGEST ECONOMIC ORGANISATION

I.1 The origin of the concept of world economy

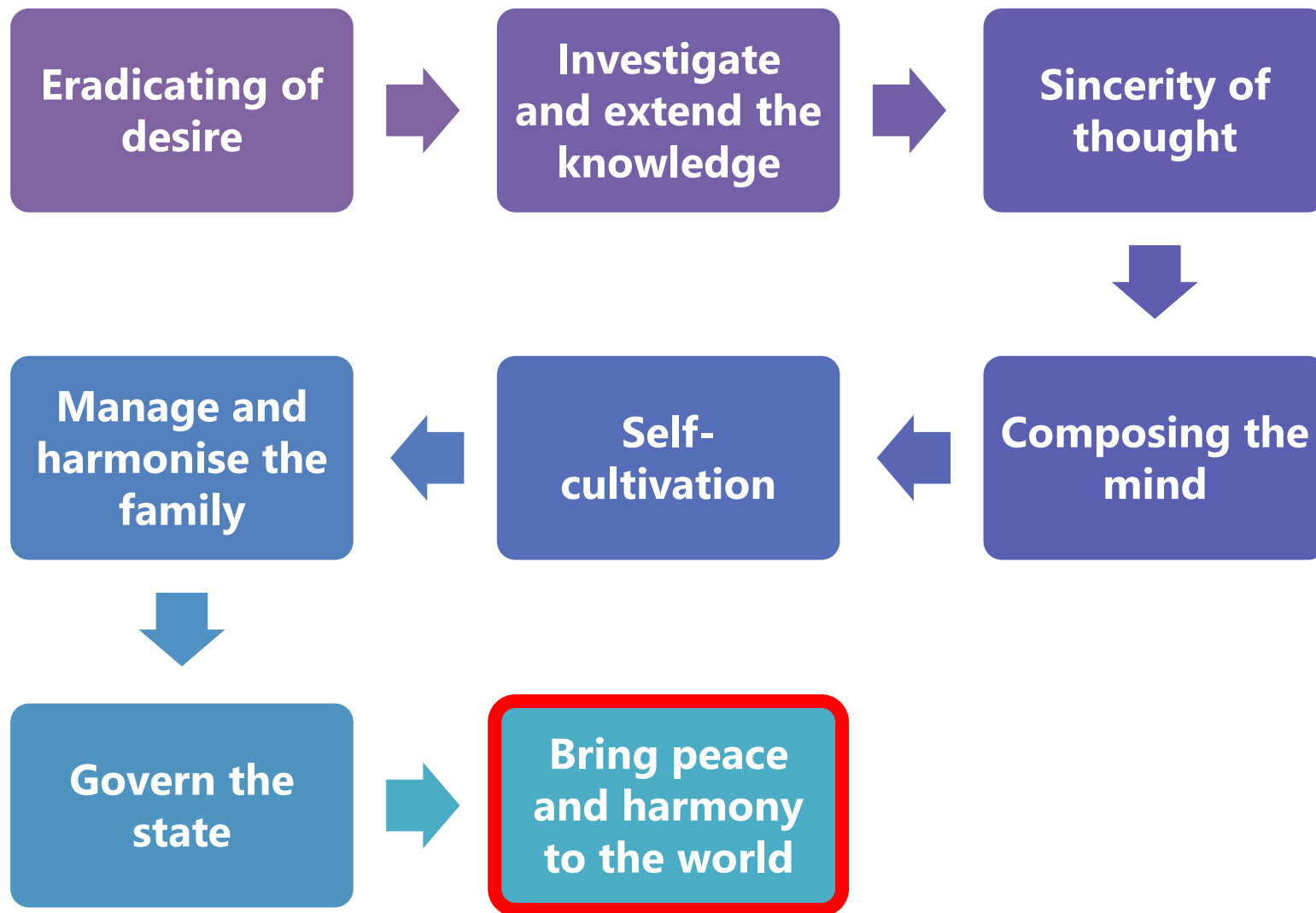
- According to Confucius, there are two organisations
 - The largest – the World
 - The smallest – the family

- *The Great Learning* can be called the catalogue of the teachings of Confucius
- **Three objects** (三綱) of the principles of *the Great Learning*
 - Brighten the brilliant virtue (restore innate virtue) (明明德)
 - Renovate the people (love others) (親民)
 - Rest in the highest excellence (reach the utmost kindness) (止於至善)

- ❑ **Object 1** is about benefiting oneself by achieving virtue and capability
- ❑ **Object 2** is about benefiting others through the principle of universal love and compassion
- ❑ **Object 3** is a perfect state that forms the previous two's goal.



- **Eight subjects (八目)** of the principles of *the Great Learning*
 - ❑ Eradicating of desire (格物)
 - ❑ Investigate and extend the knowledge (至知)
 - ❑ Sincerity of thought (誠意)
 - ❑ Composing the mind (正心)
 - ❑ Self-cultivation (修身)
 - ❑ Manage and harmonise the family (齊家)
 - ❑ Govern the state (治國)
 - ❑ Bring peace and harmony to the world (平天下)



- Despite the step-by-step process, one must always have the whole world in mind from the beginning, while personal cultivation is the root.
- In *the Great Learning*, economic principles are only mentioned in the last chapter, where he illustrates the equalisation of the whole world
 - ❑ Confucius sees the whole world as an economic unit, and economic life cannot be confined to one country or family.
 - ❑ Note that the principles mentioned in this chapter are by no means fitted only for the world economy.

I.2 The relation between world economy and world peace

- One can never study economics thoroughly unless he/she takes the world as a whole. And the world can never be at peace unless the economic life of the whole world is equal.

- The fundamental concept of world economy is the principle of reciprocity:
 - *“What a man dislikes in his superiors, let him not display in the treatment of his inferiors; what he dislikes in inferiors, let him not display in the service of his superiors; what he hates in those who are before him, let him not therewith precede those who are behind him; what he hates in those who are behind him, let him not bestow on the left; what he hates to receive on the left, let him not bestow on the right: this is what is called the principle with which, as with a measuring square, to regulate one's conduct.”*

--- Book of Rites, the Great Learning

- Recall that the principle of reciprocity is mentioned in lecture one from an ethical perspective.
- Here, it has economic implications, such as commercial policy development and international law.
- How do we operationalise the principle of reciprocity in practice?
 - ❑ The first and foremost thing to consider is how to benefit the other parties.

- In Buddhism, Shakyamuni Buddha taught about the Four Dharmas of Attraction (four saving practices 四攝法):

- ❑ Generosity
- ❑ kind words
- ❑ Beneficial action
- ❑ Cooperation

--- *The Flower Adornment Sutra*

- The four dharmas of attraction have been successfully put into practice in uniting the nine religions in Singapore.
- Discussion:
 - ❑ How do we use the four dharmas of attraction to achieve economic collaboration between countries?

II. FAMILY AS THE SMALLEST ORGANISATION

- An individual can never make his economic life absolutely independent.
- Generally, we consider a typical family with two generations. Therefore, we consider family as an economic organisation from two points of view:
 - ❑ The relation between husband and wife
 - ❑ The relation between parents and children.

II.1 Husband and wife

- In the social system of Confucius, the relation between husband and wife is the starting point.
- *“The way of the superior man may be found, in its simple elements, in the interaction of common men and women; but in its utmost reaches, it shines brightly through heaven and earth.”*

--- *Book of Rites, Doctrine of the mean*

II.1.a Economic position of woman

- Inside a family, the first and foremost job of a woman is to care for children.
- *“There has never been a girl who learned to nourish a child, that she might afterwards marry”*

--- *Book of Rites, the Great Learning*

- This implies that every married woman must have known how to nourish a child without special training and that it is a duty of a woman.

- In both Confucianism and Buddhism, women are given the highest importance and the noblest position.
 - From the embryo state to the age of three of the child, the foundation education is immensely influenced by the mother's mannerisms, state of mind, and behaviour.
 - Whether or not the family has great and sagely decedents depends on the mother.

- Throughout history, women have always been a crucial part of “managing the family”
- For this reason, the education of a little girl is even more important and that of a boy, since the impact of a girl is counted by multiple generations.



II.1.b Equality of and respect to woman

- In Confucianism, a woman and man are in the same honourable position in a family, indicated by participating in food preparation of a sacrificial ceremony for the husband's ancestor (*Book of Rites, pattern of family*).
- We must understand that ancestral remembrance ceremonies are of extreme importance in Chinese culture.

- Although we have seen that the preparation of food is the principal work of women, this does not mean that she is an enslaved person in the kitchen.
- Respect for women is also shown in the personal receiving of the bride by the emperor himself.
 - Reading: *Excerpts from Book of Rites (Question of Duke Ai) - respect to the wife*

II.2 Parents and children

- The love between parents and children is the basis of Confucius' philosophy.
- The love is natural and without any other consideration.

II.2.a The love for the same kind

- Independent of the blood is “the love for the same kind”
 - *“All living creatures between heaven and earth, being endowed with blood and breath, have a certain amount of knowledge. Possessing that amount of knowledge, there is not one of them but knows to love its species.”*

--- Book of Rites, Questions about the mourning for three years

- The love for kind is a feeling common to all creatures and is the foundation of human society
- The love between parents and children can be extended to the love of all mankind.
- The man who can do that is called a man with great filial piety.

II.2.b Doctrine of filial piety

- *The doctrine of filial piety is based on the nature of love*
- *“The service which a filial son renders his parents is as follows: In his general conduct to them, he manifests the utmost **reverence**; in his **nourishing** of them, his endeavour is to give them the utmost pleasure; when they are ill, he feels the greatest **anxiety**; in **mourning** for them dead, he exhibits every demonstration of **grief**; in **sacrificing** to them, he displays the utmost solemnity. When a son is complete in these five things, he may be pronounced able to serve his parents.”*

--- The Classic of Filial Piety

- The Classic of Filial Piety illustrates the different duties of the five classes – the emperor, the princes, the great officials, the inferior officials (the students), and the common people.
- The duties of the common people have interesting implications on family economics.

- *“They [the common people] follow the course of heaven in the revolving seasons, they distinguish the advantages afforded by different soils, they are careful of their conduct, and they are economical in their expenditure, in order to support their parents. This is the filial piety of the common people.”*

--- The Classic of Filial Piety

- Reading: *The Classic of Filial Piety*

Production

**Follow the
course of
heaven in the
revolving
seasons**

**Distinguish the
advantages
afforded by
different soils**

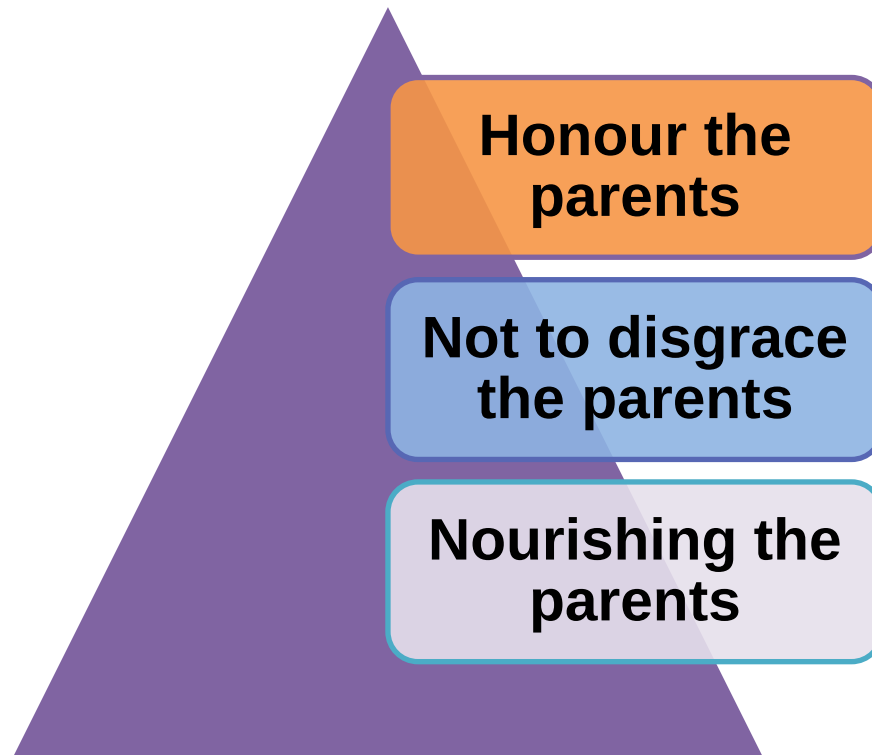
Consumption

**Economical in
their
expenditure**

**Support their
parents**

- We will see more details about the importance of work as a person in future lectures.
- On the consumption side, the teaching of Confucius has directly led to low personal financial leverage in Chinese families.
- In China, in addition to national insurance and pension schemes, children mostly take up the responsibility of caring for the retired generation.
- Is filial piety all about financial support?

- Three levels of filial piety



--- *The Book of Rites, Ji Yi*

- Therefore, although the support of parents is the lowest type of filial piety, it is a necessary step. There may be some who cannot be called filial sons because they can only support their parents, but there has never been anyone who could be called a filial son without fulfilling the duty of supporting his parents.